

Mitchell, Elinor Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 21 February 2017

Service provided by:
Elinor Mitchell

Service provider number:
SP2003904057

Care service number:
CS2003007017

The service

Introduction

The service is provided in the childminder's home in the village of Crossford. Children have access to all areas of the house but spend the majority of their time in the ground floor of the house. The children also have access to a large enclosed garden. There are currently eight children registered with the service.

Elinor Mitchell is currently registered with the following conditions:

'The service may be provided to a maximum of 8 children under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of 6 will be under 12, of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and no more than 1 is under 12 months. From 16 February 2015 until 31 August 2016, for one day per week only, during term time the care service may be provided to a maximum of 8 children under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of 7 will be under 12, of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and no more than 1 is under 12 months.

There are no restrictions to the premises for the purposes of the childminding service.

Overnight childcare will not be provided.'

What we did during our inspection

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC). Set up by Scottish Government, GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps services focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people - and what they can do to improve. GIRFEC is being woven into all policy, practice, strategy and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC. They are: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection, to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

We visited the service unannounced on the morning of 21 February 2017.

During this inspection process, we gathered evidence from various sources:

We observed the childminder working with the children. We spoke with the children attending and the childminder.

We looked at:

- registers
- service diaries
- registration certificate
- questionnaires
- the environment and equipment
- children's personal plans
- the childminder's training documents.

Views of people using the service

The pre-school child being cared for by the childminder during the inspection appeared to be very relaxed and happy at the service. The child enjoyed playing with age appropriate toys and resources and was confident making requests of the childminder who responded to the child warmly. The child also enjoyed playing with the small friendly dogs at the service.

Self assessment

The childminder had not completed a self assessment since the last inspection. The childminder should now complete the service's self assessment, giving consideration to GIRFEC and the SHANARRI indicators to show what the service does well and identifying any areas for improvements.

What the service did well

The childminder was kind and caring towards the children and knew how to meet their individual needs well. The childminder had a good variety of resources and toys for the children which were age and stage appropriate and would support the children to explore and learn.

What the service could do better

The childminder should continue to address the requirement and recommendations made at the last inspection to ensure that she is working to current best practice in the service. The childminder could access training opportunities and information about current best practice guidance to assess her service and ensure that the service is performing well. The childminder could continue to develop the play opportunities and experiences to ensure that children have opportunities to take risks, be creative and explore to promote their development.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We assessed the service as 'good' for this quality theme. We concluded this following; observing the childminder's practice, discussion with the childminder and children, reviewing feedback in our questionnaires and the service documentation and observing the outcomes for children in the service.

We observed the childminder working with a pre-school child in the service. We saw that the childminder had a kind manner with the child who was chatty and smiling throughout the inspection. The child appeared very relaxed and at home in the childminder's care and with her and her pet dogs. The child enjoyed playing with the toys and we saw that the childminder chatted to the child throughout activities, which would help to promote their language and communication skills. The childminder was caring and kind in her interaction with the child.

The pre-school child was fairly new to the service and had settled well. We saw that the childminder knew the toys and activities which the child enjoyed and was skilled at encouraging them to choose new activities and played along with them.

The childminder could tell us about each of the children she cared for and what they enjoyed doing. We saw that she had age and stage appropriate activities for the children to do and ensured that they had regular access to fresh air and energetic play to keep the children active and healthy. We spoke about ensuring that parent permissions were in place for the older children to play unsupervised at the park after school.

The childminder shared the day's activities with families at collection time verbally and showed them photographs of their activities to keep them informed about their child's day and help them be involved in their learning and development.

We saw that the childminder had developed children's personal plans which included information to ensure children's safety and their likes and dislikes. We spoke about how the childminder could develop the way she records and shares children's achievements, any concerns and next steps for their development. The children's files should now be formally updated with families at least every six months to keep children's information accurate and ensure their safety. See recommendation 1.

We spoke about keeping children safe in the service. We were satisfied that the childminder had an understanding of her responsibilities in terms of keeping children safe from abuse or neglect. It has been a number of years since the childminder had attended child protection training. The childminder should refresh her training to update her knowledge of current best practice guidance and local area guidelines. We spoke about recording and sharing any concerns she has about children in her care to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

The childminder knew to get parent-signed permission to administer medicines in the service, however the forms and policy were not in line with current best practice guidance. See recommendation 2.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. It is recommended that the childminder introduce a system to ensure that children's care plans are updated whenever there is a significant change and at least every six months, in line with regulatory requirements.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 6 - Support and Development.

2. It is recommended that the childminder review and update the medication policy and practice, in line with current best practice guidance, to help ensure children's safety.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 3 - Health and Wellbeing.

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We found the service to be providing a good quality of environment for the children. We concluded this after we observed the childminder working in her home with the children, spoke with the children, reviewed the information in the questionnaires parents returned to us and examined relevant documents in the service.

The childminder had redesigned the ground floor of her house to open the space up and give more light. The childminder had not notified us of this building work and a recommendation is made in the management and leadership theme in this report. The children enjoyed playing in the space and could look out into the large enclosed garden. The childminder's home was tidy and well-organised to provide care to children of all ages. The children had access to two play spaces on the ground floor of the house which allowed them to play with others or by themselves. The childminder had a good range of resources and toys and we saw that these would meet the needs of the children in her care.

The childminder's practice during the inspection and records seen showed that the children enjoyed a good variety of in and outdoor activities which would promote their development. The children were encouraged to choose activities independently to direct their own learning and resources were stored in a way which made this easy for them. Where the children struggled to make choices, the childminder supported them to make decisions by selecting a few appropriate resources for them to choose between. This helped the children feel included and respected. We spoke about the My World Outdoors (www.hub.careinspectorate.com/media/405223/loose-parts-play-toolkit.pdf), and loose parts play documents (http://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/3091/My_world_outdoors_-_early_years_good_practice_2016.pdf).

The childminder was aware of the current guidance for infection prevention and control and we saw that she was following this in the service. This will help to keep children safe and healthy.

The childminder told us that there had been no accidents or incidents since the last inspection. She knew to keep records of accidents and incidents and to record information relating to them, for example: monitoring concussion, telephoning parents and if medical attention was required. We spoke about notifying the regulator of any serious accidents or incidents.

The children bring packed lunches to the service, however the childminder sometimes provides light meals and snacks, for example home-made soup and pizzas. The childminder should now register as a food business with Environmental Health.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated the service as 'adequate' for this quality theme. We concluded this after assessing the service's self assessment, observing the childminder's practice, discussing key issues, taking note of the children and their families' views and reviewing documents in the service.

The childminder kept up to date with changes in legislation and best practice through contact with the Care Inspectorate, SCMA, updates on relevant websites, information from Fife Council and through discussions with other registered services. We spoke about checking the Care Inspectorate's website Hub regularly to see new guidance that has been issued, in order to keep the service's policies and practice current.

The childminder consulted the children throughout the inspection about the activities and care routines, like snack times. This practice helps the children to feel respected and included.

The childminder had not submitted a self assessment since the last inspection. We spoke about the importance of evaluation to help drive further improvement in the quality of the service. We spoke about how the childminder could develop the consultation with children and families further to help with evaluations.

The childminder could use documents like SCMA's guide to child led participation (<http://www.childminding.org/news/free-child-led-participation-guide-for-scma-members>) to help her develop this and develop her own self-evaluation skills to drive further improvement in the service. See recommendation 1.

We spoke about using My World Outdoors and Inspiring Scotland's Loose Parts Play document and examples in Building the Ambition and Education Scotland's Improvement Hub which to develop challenging in and outdoor activities to promote their development.

We discussed child protection and found that the childminder had an understanding about her responsibilities in terms of protecting children in the service from harm. We noted that she knew what to record and knew when to share information with other agencies to ensure children's safety.

The childminder's sister had moved in to the premises since the last inspection. A notification and disclosure should be submitted and completed at the earliest opportunity to ensure children's safety. See recommendation 2.

The childminder had building work carried out in her home since the last inspection to open up the living room to dining room and kitchen. This has helped children to move freely around the space and access the garden more easily. The space is lighter and the children enjoyed playing in it. The work should have been notified to the regulator before work commenced and copies of building warrants, plans and building completion certificates should have been submitted before the service used the areas for childminding purposes. This must now be done as a matter of urgency. See recommendation 2.

The following document details the notifications service must make:

[http://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/2609/Records childminding services must keep and notification reporting guidance \(V5\).pdf](http://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/2609/Records%20childminding%20services%20must%20keep%20and%20notification%20reporting%20guidance%20(V5).pdf)

The registration certificate contained an expired condition. The childminder should now submit a variation application to have the condition removed.

The childminder had not accessed any training since her last inspection. The recommendation made at a previous inspection is continued. See recommendation 3.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 3

1. We recommend that the service further develop quality assurance systems to have clear priorities which are focussed on outcomes for children. This could include:

- a self assessment
- use of Building the Ambition to assess quality and plan improvements (<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00458455.pdf>)
- use of How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare? to evaluate the service against national standards (<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/frwk1hgioearlyyears.aspx>)
- use of various observation types to monitor practice

- involvement of children and families in evaluating the service
- identifying training needs and areas of interest to develop the service.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 13 - Improving the Service

2. It is recommended that the childminder develop her knowledge of notifications services must make to the regulator and ensure that these are submitted for the building works completed in her home since the last inspection.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 14 - Well-Managed Service.

3. It is recommended that the childminder continue to identify relevant training and access this to extend her skills and knowledge of best practice, for example training in Risk Assessment.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 13 - Improving the Service and Standard 14 - Well-Managed Service.

Grade: 3 - adequate

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

The childminder must not care for more children than is stated on her conditions of registration. No more than eight children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of six will be under 12, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. This is in order to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 SSI 2011/210 Regulation 4(1)(a) Welfare of users

Timescale for implementation: with immediate effect on receipt of this report

This requirement was made on 13 January 2015.

Action taken on previous requirement

The childminder was keeping an accurate record of the children's attendance in the service diary. This showed that she had been complying with her conditions of registration since the last inspection

Met - outwith timescales

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

It is recommended that the childminder develop the systems in the service to show what feedback has been gathered in the service and how it has been used to show children and families how they have contributed to developing the service.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 13 - Improving the Service

This recommendation was made on 13 January 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had not developed her practice in this area and this recommendation is continued under quality theme four.

Recommendation 2

It is recommended that the childminder continue to identify relevant training and access this to extend her skills and knowledge of best practice, for example training in Risk Assessment.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 13 - Improving the Service and Standard 14 - Well-Managed Service.

This recommendation was made on 13 January 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had not accessed training since the last inspection. This recommendation is continued under quality theme four of this report.

Recommendation 3

It is recommended that the childminder introduce a system to ensure that children's care plans are updated whenever there is a significant change and at least every six months, in line with regulatory requirements.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 6 - Support and Development.

This recommendation was made on 12 May 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had not addressed this recommendation and it is continued under quality theme one of this report.

Recommendation 4

It is recommended that the childminder review and update the medication policy and practice, in line with current best practice guidance, to help ensure children's safety.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 3 - Health and Wellbeing.

This recommendation was made on 12 May 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had not taken action to address this recommendation. It is continued under quality theme one of this report.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
14 Jan 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
13 Jan 2015	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
17 Jan 2014	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	2 - Weak
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
17 Feb 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
27 Jan 2009	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed

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